R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 431 FL 000 037

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY--RECOMMENDATION NO. 59 TO THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION CONCERNING THE TEACHING OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS, ADOPTED BY THE XXVIIITH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, GENEVA, 1965.

PUB DATE JUN 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$0.32 8P.

DESCRIPTORS- *COURSE OBJECTIVES, *CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, *MODERN LANGUAGES, *SECONDARY SCHOOLS, *SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS, TEACHER EXCHANGE PROGRAMS, TEACHING METHODS, CONFERENCES, GENEVA, UNESCO

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, SPONSORED JOINTLY BY THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION, ISSUED AN OFFICIAL POLICY STATEMENT. RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE CONCERNING (1) THE VALUES OF STUDYING A MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE, (2) THE PLACE OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE CURRICULUM, (3) THE OBJECTIVES OF LANGUAGE COURSES, (4) THE CONTENT OF COURSES, (5) THE CHOICE OF METHODS, TECHNIQUES, AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, (6) THE QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING, AND INSERVICE TRAINING OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS, AND (7) THE NEED FOR AN INTENSIFIED PROGRAM OF EXCHANGE FOR TEACHERS, ASSISTANTS, AND STUDENTS. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "CONTACT," NUMBER 8, JUNE 1966. (AM)

CONTACT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education
This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

Publication
de la Fédération Internationale des Professeurs
de Langues Vivantes

FL 000 037
ED011431

8

JUIN 1966

BUCH- UND OFFSETDRUCK PAUL GERIN • WIEN

RÉDACTION DU CONTACT

Rédacteur en chef: Prof. Dr. E. Stürzl, Université de Salzbourg, Autriche

Comité de Rédaction:
Dr. A. Amato, Italie
M. M. Antier, France
Prof. Dr. R. Filipović, Yougoslavie
Mr. J. Franke, Pays-Bas
Mr. S.-G. Hellström, Suède
Mr. F. J. Warne, Grande Bretagne

Tout courrier relatif au CONTACT doit être adressé à Prof. Dr. E. Stürzl, Universität Salzburg, Institut für englische Sprache und Literatur, Mirabellplatz 2, A-5020 Salzburg, Autriche.

BUREAU DE LA F.I.P.L.V.

Présidence d'honneur:
Dr. M. F. Adams, Grande Bretagne
Prof. L. Landré, France
M. G. Roger, Inspecteur général, France
Mr. F. J. Warne, Grande Bretagne
Mr. D. M. van Willigen, Pays-Bas

Présidence: Dr. S. G. Johansson, Suède

Secrétariat Général: Mr. H. Jalling, Suède

Trésorier Général: Mr. J. Emmenegger, Suisse

Vice-Présidence:
M. M. Antier, France
Dr. A. Bondi, Italie
Mr. A. Bourg, Luxembourg
Dr. H. Bruneder, Autriche
Prof. Dr. R. Filipović, Yougoslavie
Dr. P. Hartig, Allemagne
Dr. V. Puttonen, Finlande

Secrétariat adjoint: Mr. Henry Andersen, Danemark

Trésorier adjoint: Mr. J. Boot, Pays-Bas

Délégués à l'Unesco:
M. M. Antier, France
Prof. L. Landré, France

Recherche et méthodologie

Recommendation No. 59 to the Ministries of Education

concerning

The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in Secondary Schools

adopted by

The XXVIIIth International Conference on Public Education Geneva, 1965

The International Conference on Public Education,

Convened in Geneva by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bureau of Education, having assembled on the twelfth of July, nineteen hundred and sixty-five, for its twenty-eighth session, adopts on the twenty-third of July, nineteen hundred and sixty-five, the following recommendation:

The Conference,

Considering that the knowledge of one or more modern foreign languages is a part of the pupil's general culture and intellectual training at least in the same way as other subjects in the secondary school curriculum and that, in many countries, at least one modern foreign language is an indispensable instrument for the broader and deeper study of certain disciplines in higher courses,

Considering that it is for peoples themselves to choose which modern foreign languages are to be taught,

Considering, however, that in countries where the local language has not hitherto been the language of instruction, it is necessary in the first place to contribute to the development of national languages and their emancipation and to the strengthening of their position in international relations,

Considering that the knowledge of a modern foreign language, of the literature, history, civilization and way of life of the countries where it is spoken, can have a great influence on the improvement of international understanding and agreement among peoples,

Considering that the development of international relations in all fields and the perfecting of means of transport and communication are constantly increasing the practical necessity for knowing at least one modern foreign language and being able to use it with ease,

Considering that the knowledge of modern foreign languages accelerates the spread of scientific and technical discoveries, thereby contributing effectively to the economic and cultural development of countries,

Considering that information media, such as radio, films and television bring countries into close contact with each other and that young people and adults have access to these various media,

Considering that the possibilities of studying abroad and exchanging students and specialists between countries that do not speak the same language are also becoming more and more numerous,

Considering that it is necessary to modernize foreign language teaching methods and media, taking into account the development of knowledge and technology,

Considering the numerous recommendations concerning the teaching of modern foreign languages formulated by various bodies and in particular by the International Conference on Public Education in recommendation No. 11 which it adopted in 1937, at its sixth session,

Considering that, to satisfy similar aspirations, countries which are different from each other must find different solutions to the problem of teaching modern foreign languages in secondary schools,

Submits the following recommendation to the Ministries of Education of the various countries:

I. Place Given to Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages

1. The place given to the teaching of modern foreign languages in each country depends on the country's particular situation; it is, however, recommended that provision for the study of at least one modern foreign language be made in the curriculum at every level of all secondary schools.

2. Choice of the first foreign language may usually be dictated by the cultural, geographical, ethnic, economic, etc. needs of the country; when a second modern foreign language is taught it is desirable, wherever the means are available, that the pupils be able to choose between several languages according to their individual interests and needs.

3. It is recommended that the study of a second modern foreign language should not be begun until the basic linguistic structures of the first language have been acquired.

4. Since the study of modern foreign languages in secondary schools should not be restricted to an elementary introduction, it is recommended that sufficient time be devoted to it in the weekly time-table.

5. Since the efficiency of the teaching of a modern foreign language is largely proportionate to the pupils' interest in it, this interest should be stimulated by attaching due importance, for example, to the modern foreign language test in the various secondary school examinations.

6. When courses of study at the senior secondary level are offered in which students may specialize in subjects, particular attention should be paid to the provision of sections in which several modern foreign languages can be studied intensively. Diplomas or certificates awarded for the successful completion of such courses should have the same status as those awarded in other subject areas.

7. In view of the ease with which young children learn languages and of the interest which this preparation presents for the study of modern foreign languages in the secondary school, encouragement should be given to experiments in teaching a modern foreign language before the beginning of secondary schooling, all the necessary precautions being taken to ensure that the assimilation of this language does not compromise the acquisition of the mother tongue.

II. Aims, Syllabuses and Methods

8. The aims of teaching modern foreign languages are at the same time educational and practical; the intellectual training which learning a modern foreign language provides must not be obtained at the expense of the practical use of that language; on the other hand, its practical application must not hinder the thorough study of its linguistic characteristics.

9. The teaching of modern foreign languages is not an end in itself, but should serve by its cultural and human aspects to train both pupils' mind and character and contribute to better international understanding and the establishment of peaceful and friendly cooperation among peoples.

10. It follows that, alongside the oral and written work on the language itself, provision must be made in syllabuses for study not only of the literature but also an objective view of the important aspects of the life of the countries where the language is spoken, while taking into account the pupils' intellectual possibilities and interests.

11. The instructions which may be given officially in regard to choice of methods, techniques and textbooks should, while guiding the teacher in his work, at the same time leave him sufficient freedom and scope for initiative, compatible with methods recognized as valid, so that methods and textbooks in use may gradually be improved.

12. The various active methods, which have proved their worth over a long period, appear to be the most suitable for teaching a modern foreign language. New modern foreign language teaching techniques and programmed instruction should be studied and research and experiments carried out in order to ensure that they are used appropriately and efficiently.

13. What is most important is that learning of the spoken language precede that of the written language, that from the beginning a considerable place be given to aural work and to pronunciation and conversation and that the mother tongue or language of instruction be used as little as possible.

14. Nevertheless, grammar and syntax, as well as spelling, must not be neglected, although every effort should be made to teach these so that they do not constitute an aim in themselves but help to promote the correct use of the modern foreign language both in speaking and writing.

15. The importance of research and experimentation in determining the most effective methods and arrangements in teaching a modern foreign language in a particular school system cannot be overestimated. Account must be taken of peculiar characteristics of the local situation and of the environment and mother tongue of pupils.

16. It is desirable that, conditions permitting, modern foreign language classes be divided into groups as small as possible.

17. Supplementary activities which call for pupils' active participation (games, songs, dramatization, language clubs, etc.) should be sufficiently numerous and varied to contribute to the consolidation and enrichment of the knowledge acquired.

18. Every possible means should be employed to facilitate and increase pupils' journeys and visits to the countries whose language they are learning; these visits may be organized individually or collectively as exchanges under the guidance of teachers, youth organizations, etc. When such visits prove impossible, holiday camps should be organized in which native speakers of the language studied would take part.

19. Audio-visual media which have proved particularly effective in the teaching of modern foreign languages should be made available to all secondary level establishments; a sufficient number of specially designed language laboratories for secondary schools should also be set up to meet the essential needs of each country.

20. The usefulness of radio, films and television to supplement the systematic teaching of modern foreign languages should also be emphasized; it is important that the programmes and time-tables of the radio and television broadcasts be closely coordinated with those of the education establishments, and that the latter be equipped with the necessary receiving sets and additional visual material; it must, however, be stressed that radio, films and television cannot be a substitute for the teacher's instruction.

21. It is important that school textbooks for modern foreign languages reflect the life and culture of the pupils' country and of the countries whose language they are studying, that they be attractive and illustrated by photographs and pictures appropriate to the spirit of active methods, and that account be taken in their preparation of the work accomplished in the linguistic field. In some countries pupils learn a foreign language through its use as the language of instruction; textbooks used for this purpose should reflect the culture of the pupils' country.

22. Great importance should be attached, especially in senior secondary schools, to the reading of authors who can impart a general education value to the teaching of modern foreign languages, in particular through comment bearing not only on grammatical but rather on explanatory, cultural and aesthetic aspects of their writings.

23. School libraries should be provided with books, reviews and newspapers in foreign languages and with any other documentation, including audio-visual documentation, which might help to give a better knowledge of the different countries; for this purpose much might be gained from exchanges arranged between schools in the various countries concerned, of language-teaching material of all kinds.

24. It is important to emphasize and develop, to the greatest possible extent, the coordination between the teaching of modern foreign languages and that of mother tongue, history, geography, history of art and any other subjects which may bear some relation to modern foreign languages.

25. It would seem that good results have been gained by experiments which some countries have made with the teaching of certain subjects in a particular foreign language; this practice might possibly be extended to other countries and be adopted especially in the modern foreign language sections which are being established in secondary schools or in certain specialized schools.

26. It is essential for modern foreign language syllabuses to be revised and adapted periodically in order that account may be taken not only of changes in the language taught and in the countries which speak it, but also of the development in the modern methods and techniques available to schools and teachers.

III. Teaching Staff

27. It is essential that modern foreign language teachers should have general and linguistic training as well as training in the theory and practice of education, in conformity with the considerable progress of linguistics, the learning process and modern audio-visual techniques.

28. In order to develop the training of modern foreign language teachers and increase the number of qualified teachers, it is desirable to have recourse to foreign teachers who can help to train qualified national teachers.

29. It is important that travel and study journeys abroad be facilitated and encouraged for all language teachers and that scholarships and a system of paid leave be provided for this purpose.

30. In further training of teachers attention should be paid to the pedagogical aspect of their teaching and in this connection it is recommended that courses and national meetings be organized for keeping them up to date with relevant new methods and techniques applicable to their subject and liaison bulletins published enabling methods to be understood and results obtained to be compared.

31. In order to overcome the shortage which, in regard to modern foreign language teachers, affects a large number of countries, use should be made of every means designed to encourage and expedite the recruitment of such teachers; rather than relying only upon citizens of the country concerned, it may be desirable to engage staff belonging to the countries whose language is to be taught.

IV. International Collaboration

32. Within the framework of international action, it is desirable that studies in comparative research be undertaken concerning modern foreign language teaching and teaching material. It is especially desirable to collect, compare and publish the results of experiments which have been carried out in various countries in teaching a foreign language before the beginning of secondary schooling.

33. The appointment of foreign assistants for providing practice in the oral language seems to offer two kinds of advantage: firstly, it helps to improve pronunciation and intonation as well as knowledge of the everyday language; secondly, it provides the assistants with opportunities both for becoming acquainted with the host country and for practising the language. All the necessary measures should nonetheless be taken for these assistants to be previously informed of their task and prepared to carry it out.

34. It is recommended that governments and international organizations, as well as any other recognized agencies, should cooperate in instituting an international system for the exchange of teachers, assistants and students, which would reinforce and supplement any action already undertaken in this connection.

35. Countries which lack the financial resources and qualified staff necessary for organizing or improving the teaching of modern foreign languages should be provided with technical assistance in the form of material aid, visits by experts, scholarships for study and research, courses held locally, etc.

36. In order to develop the various forms of out-of-school activity contributing both to perfect pupils' knowledge of a modern foreign language and of the life and culture of other nations, and to educate young people in the spirit of international understanding and the love of peace, it is desirable: (a) to develop the system of Unesco associated schools and twin schools; (b) to develop correspondence between pupils in schools in different countries; (c) to organize summer and holiday camps and excursions in which young people of different nations would take part; (d) to ensure the collaboration of specialist teachers and educationists in language camps held for young people whose study of a modern foreign language is advanced.

V. Implementation of the Present Recommendation

37. It is important that the text of this recommendation be given wide publicity by Ministries of Education, education authorities for the level most immediately concerned, universities and institutes of education, educational documentation centres, modern foreign language teaching federations, both national and international, teachers' and parents' associations, etc.; the educational press should play a large part in making the recommendation known among the services concerned, the administrative and teaching staff and the general public.

38. In countries where it seems necessary, Ministries of Education are invited to request the appropriate bodies to undertake certain activities, such as for example: (a) to examine the present recommendation and to compare it with the *de jure* and *de facto* situation in their respective countries; (b) to consider the advantages and disadvantages of implementing each of the clauses not yet in effect; (c) to adapt each clause, should its implementation be considered desirable, to the requirements of the individual country; (d) to suggest the regulations and practical measures which should be taken to ensure the implementation of each clause examined.

39. Unesco regional centres and other regional or international organizations of an educational and cultural character, with the cooperation of the ministries concerned, are invited to facilitate the study of this recommendation at the regional level with a view to its adaptation to the special characteristics of each region.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.